

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 04947 131244Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
IO-13 AID-05 SSM-03 MCT-01 TRSE-00 EB-07 /091 W
-----131245Z 099790 /43

O P 131130Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1618
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY
AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY
AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 4947

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PK
SUBJECT: POLITICAL SITUATION IN PAKISTAN

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO WILL MAKE NATIONALLY
TELEVISED SPEECH IN NATION ASSEMBLY MAY 13. IN PRESS
CONFERENCE MAY 12, PM SAID HE IS STILL AWAITING PNA
PROPOSALS. PRESIDENTIAL ORDINANCE EMPOWERING ELECTION
COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE AND TRY CASES OF ELECTION RIGGICZ
IS REPORTED TO BE WITHDRAWN. LAHORE AND KARACHI ARE UNDER
TIGHT CURFEW FOR MAY 13, DAY OF THREATENDED PNA ANTI-GOVERNMENT
DEMONSTRATIONS. IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MAY 12, PM AND
MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE HINTED PNA LEADER ASGHAR KHAN
MAY BE CHARGED WITH TREASON. BBC ALSO CAME UNDER ATTACK
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IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MAY 12.

2. PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO, WHO DID NOT MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT
MAY 12 OF A SETTLEMENT WITH THE OPPOSITION PAKISTAN NATIONAL
ALLIANCE (7/-), AS IT WAS RUMORED HE MIGHT, WILL ADDRESS
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AT 1730 HOURS MAY 13 IN NATIONALLY
TELEVISED SPEECH. WE WILL REPORT SUBSTANCE OF SPEECH

WHEN IT IS DELIVERED.

3. EVENING OF MAY 12 BHUTTO HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE DURING WHICH HE DISCLOSED THAT HE HAD MET WITH PNA PRESIDENT MAULANA MUFTI MAHMOOD EVENING OF MAY 11. THE PM TOLD REPORTERS THAT MUFTI HAD PROMISED TO SEND PNA PROPOSALS TO THE PM ON MAY 12, BUT BY EVENING THE PROPOSALS HAD NOT ARRIVED. HE SAID THAT IT DEPENDS ON THE NATURE OF THE PROPOSALS HE RECEIVES WHETHER A DIALOGUE WILL BEGIN BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE PNA. HE DENIED THAT HE IS AWARE OF THE PNA'S LATEST POSITION. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE PNA'S CALL FOR OBSERVING MAY 13 AS "BLACK DAY," THE PM NOTED THAT THE PNA HAS BEEN MAKING MANY CALLS FOR DEMONSTRATIONS AND STATED THAT AGITATION AND TALKS ARE NOT COMPATIBLE. HE ADDED THAT RELEASE OF PERSONS ARRESTED DURING THE POST-ELECTION AGITATION IS NEGOTIABLE.

4. ONE DISCONCERTING ELEMENT OF THE PM'S PRESS CONFERENCE WAS HIS REFUSAL TO COMMENT WHEN ASKED ABOUT "REPORTS" OF FOREIGN TROOP MOVEMENT ON ANY OF PAKISTAN'S BORDERS. HOWEVER, DEPARTING POLITICAL COUNSELOR WAS TOLD MAY 12 BY MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR SOUTH ASIA THAT "INDIANS ARE BEING GOOD BOYS."

5. INDEPENDENT URDU DAILY NAWA-I-WAQT REPORTED MAY 12 THAT MARCH 21 PRESIDENTIAL ORDINANCE, EMPOWERING ELECTION COMMISSION TO HEAR CASES OF POLL RIGGING AND TO INITIATE ITS OWN INVESTIGATIONS INTO ELECTION MISPRACTICES, HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN. THIS COMES ONLY A FEW DAYS AFTER THE CONFIDENTIAL

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DISCLOSURE THAT THE CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER WILL LEAVE PAKISTAN FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT.

6. THOUGH CONGENS WILL REPORT SECURITY SITUATION SEPARATELY, MAY 12 NEWSPAPERS WE RECEIVED REPORT THAT CURFEW HAS BEEN GREATLY TIGHTENED IN LAHORE FOR MAY 13 , VIRTUALLY CLOSEING THE CITY BECAUSE OF THREATENED PNA ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS. CURFEW ALSO REMAINS IN EFFECT IN KARACHI.

7. IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MAY 12, SUBJECT OF PNA LEADER ASGHAR KHAN'S LETTER TO LEADERS OF ARMED FORCES REQUESTING THEM TO FOLLOW THEIR CONSCIENCE WAS DESCRIBED BY PM AS "HIGH TREASON". HE WARNED THE OPPOSITION, THAT SUCH CALLS TO THE ARMED FORCES WERE INIMICAL TO THE STATE-"WHAT SHALL REMAIN OF PAKISTAN IF THE DISCIPLINE OF THE ARMED FORCES IS DSSTROYED"? MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE, GENERAL TIKKA KHAN, STATED THAT THE GOP HAD THE MATTER OF A POSSIBLE TREASON CASE UNDER CONSIDERATION.

8. FOR A CHANGE THE BBC, RATHER THAN THE USG, TOOK VAST
MAJORITY OF THE PUNCHES IN MAY 13 PAKISTAN PRESS COVERAGE
OF FOREIGN INSTITUTIONS IN THE NEWSPAPERS WE RECEIVE.N
DURING AFTERNOON OF MAY 12, MOTION CAME TO FLOOR OF

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CALLING FOR EXPULSION OF BBC REPORTER
FROM PAKISTAN. AFTER FUSILADE OF ACRIMONY ABOUT BBC
COVERAGE OF PAKISTANI POLITICAL EVENTS, PM WADED INTO THE
FRAY AND NOTED THAT BBC REPORTAGE WAS MALICIOUS AND
INVIDIOUS, AND THAT THIS FOLLOWS HISTORICAL PATTERN OF
ANTI-PAKISTANI PROPAGANDA BY BBC. HOWEVER, THE PM CONCLUDED,
LET THE REPORTER DO HIS WORST--PAKISTAN WOULD NOT NOW
VIOLATE TRADITION OF HOSPITALITY BY EXPELLING HIM.
AMSTUTZ

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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PK, (BHUTTO, ALI)
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